

## Editorial

## Do your part

The past few federal elections have shown a disturbing trend towards indifference from Canadian voters. In fact, in the last election in 2000 only 61.2 per cent of the country's 13 million eligible voters marked a ballot—a record low turnout. It is a trend we sincerely hope changes on June 28.

Surely there is no greater aspect of living in a democracy than the right to freely choose those we wish to govern us. It is a right far too many of us take for granted when it's time to cast a ballot.

That said, we hope all voters do their part over the coming weeks to educate themselves about the local candidates, party leaders, the issues and the needs of this country and then, having done so, make an informed choice.

In 2000, the Liberals captured 100 of the 103 available seats in Ontario and every seat in the GTA. Due to realignment there are now 106 seats available, including the new riding affecting Halton Hills voters, the riding of Wellington-Halton Hills which encompasses our town, Fergus, Erin and several other smaller villages and hamlets in Wellington County.

Undoubtedly, this election will be won in Ontario, and specifically the Greater Toronto Area, making our riding a significant one.

Several months ago, a fourth Liberal majority government was a foregone conclusion, however, in politics things can change quickly.

The Liberals found themselves caught in a sponsorship scandal that saw millions of taxpayers dollars wasted and the electorate casting a more discerning eye on the Grits' record of the past 10 years. Combined with a costly and flawed gun registry, the billion-dollar Human Resources boondoggle, little or no improvement in areas of health care, military, youth crime or immigration, voters have a reason to consider alternatives.

Those alternatives include, primarily, the new Conservative Party of Canada and the New Democratic Party.

Stephen Harper, who will lead a party of former Alliance members and Progressive Conservatives into their first election, has strong support in the west while Paul Martin's Liberals enjoy greater support in the Maritimes and are in a dogfight with the Bloc Quebecois in Quebec. That means Harper must make himself—and his party—appealing to Ontarians. It is a selling job that will ultimately determine the outcome of this election.

Jack Layton is hoping to bring a vibrant, new look to the NDP which managed to win only 13 seats last time out. Doubling those numbers would be a major triumph for the former Toronto city councillor.

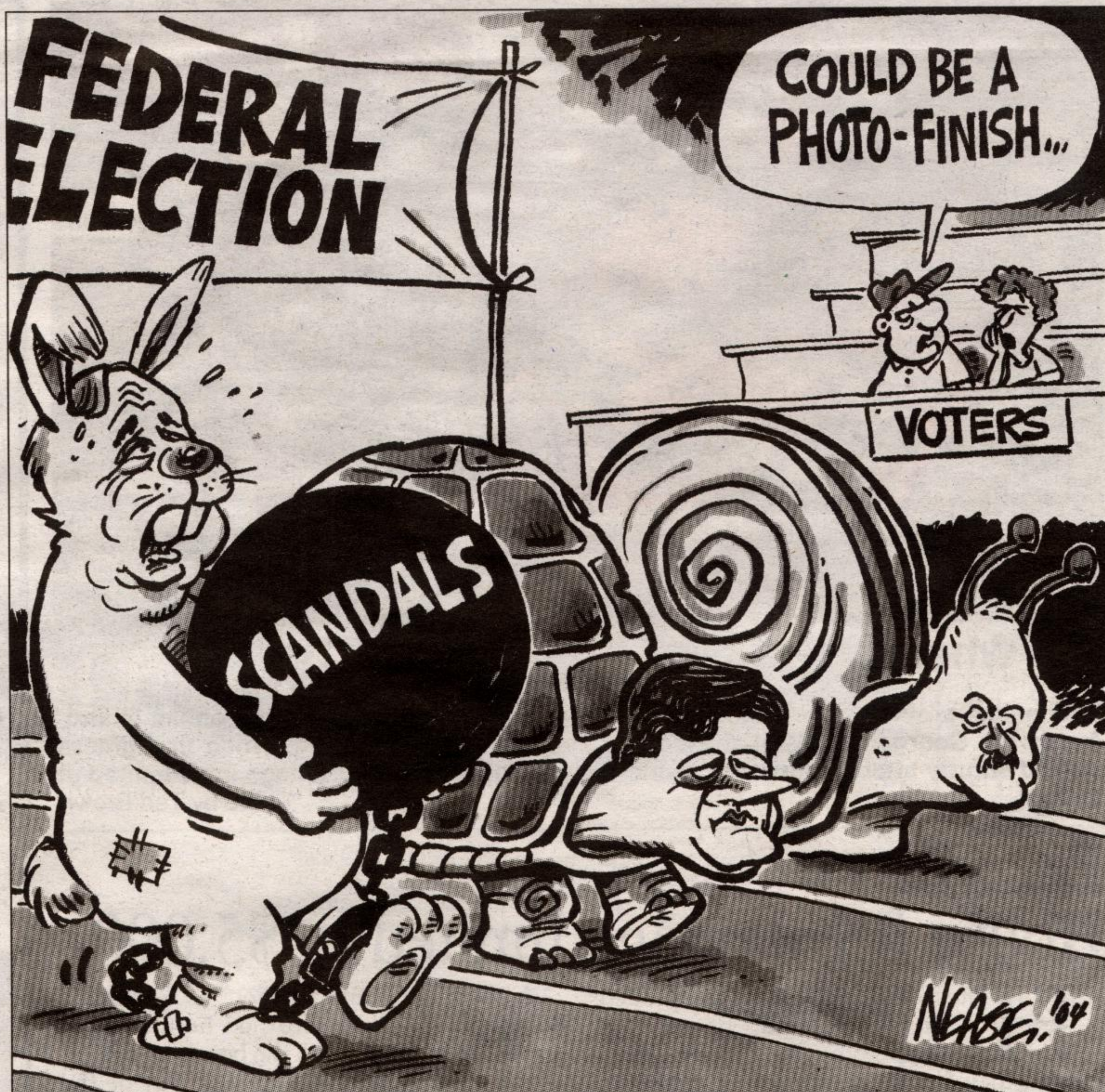
There is, and will be, much for voters to consider between now and June 28. As we wish good luck to all the candidates, we do the same for those in whose hands the future is held.

## Join the hospital fight

The future of the Georgetown Hospital Campus of the William Osler Health Centre could well be decided at Thursday's WOHC board of directors' meeting.

The town is providing free bus transportation to the meeting where it is expected the issue of closing the Georgetown obstetrics/pediatrics ward will be discussed.

If you care about this town's hospital call Daphne Millar at the town office 905-873-2600 ext. 2345 to book a seat on the bus. It is imperative hospital officials know this community is not taking this decision lightly.



## Letters to the editor...

## How will town attract new doctors?

Dear editor,

Re: May 7 editorial, Bye-bye baby.

I am one of the 300 families per year who have had the pleasure of having brought a child into the world at Georgetown hospital. I was one of the first babies born in the obstetrics unit 39 years ago, and my daughter is to be one of the last, being born 11 days ago.

With this in mind, I would like to ask William Osler CEO Bob Bell a few things: We have had a great deal of trouble in Halton Hills the past few years attracting family physicians. With the obstetrics and pediatrics units closing, how are we going to bring in new doctors?

Our current family physician recently came to Halton Hills, as he believed that he could perform the full lifetime of care in a small community. Now that the units are being closed, he wonders whether he made the right choice, and whether he will take on any expectant mothers as patients, knowing a drive to Brampton will be the only choice.

How can Georgetown hospital be expected to perform 1,000 births each year to keep it fiscally viable? The entire William Osler

Heath Centre (including Brampton and Etobicoke campuses) total 7,000 births per year, and boasts that it is, "One of the largest and busiest pediatrics units in the GTA".

With this in mind, I, for one, am glad that Georgetown can provide a less busy, more patient-focused care.

William Osler's motto is "People caring about people". Georgetown does it, and does it well.

I understand that Mr. Bell has some pennies to be saved. Unfortunately, the obstetrics unit happens to be one of the few places in the hospital where life is brought in, instead of being taken away.

Please don't let this happen, Halton Hills! Write to Bob Bell, and to the provincial offices who can rectify this dangerous action.

And to the 300 families who DIDN'T choose to go to the Brampton hospital last year, good choice!

Bruce Wilson,  
Georgetown

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